



Using Time Travel to Explore Turning Points in History Bridging Ages conference in Tallinn, Estonia, 3 - 5 June 2011



The conference is organized by Bridging Ages.
International Organization in Historic Environment Education
and Time Travels together with the Tallinn City Museum.

Call for papers

The past has not always been a smooth, linear process. Changes often come suddenly and the society takes another direction. Sometimes the changes come violently, sometimes more peaceful, sometimes you don't see the turning point until afterwards. There are changes only affecting the local community but there are also major changes affecting nationally and internationally.



Tallinn Old Town.

In the 20th century the two world wars have been turning points for many; the Great Depression, the collapse of the Berlin wall and the Soviet empire, the end of the apartheid system, the peace treaty on Ireland, the atomic bomb, liberation from colonial rule in Africa, global warming, the green revolution are other turning points. And there are many more...

How do we deal with those turning points when writing our history? Is the turning point a way to make peace with/understand the past, a

way to healing and reconciliation after a conflict? Or is it only the victor who writes the "new" history? And what local sites and stories are connected to the turning point?

At the Bridging Ages conference in Tallinn we are going to explore how we deal with Turning Points in History in today's society. We will use the Time Travel method to experience the changes in Estonian history in the 1980s. And we want more examples from all over the world how we today deal with turning points in history, how local events and sites are used. And how all of this benefit's today's society.

The aim is to discuss both theoretical issues and share practical experiences.

Some of the key questions

- How should the past be told and whose stories and perspectives are important?
- In what way can turning points in the past promote social cohesion and peace today?
- How can local historic sites and events be used to explore turning points in history? What is the role of museums, schools, universities, municipalities and community organizations?
- What educational methods are useful in understanding and learning from changes and turning points in the past? Studies-story telling-Time Travels-...

We are now calling for papers from scholars and professionals in all relevant disciplines and professions working at museums, schools, universities, heritage and community organisations, municipalities, tourism sector etc.

Send your proposal containing a title, an abstract and a few words about yourself by 1st of March 2011 to kadri.nigulas@linnamuuseum.ee.

The conference

The conference will take place in Tallinn, the capital city of Estonia during its reign as European Capital of Culture. Sessions, comprising of lectures, seminars and workshops, will be held on the June 3rd and 5th and a Time Travel will take place on June 4th. The program is designed to foster the development of discussions relating to the relationship between theoretical frameworks and practical fieldwork. The conference is due to take place at the same time as the traditional medieval culture festival Old Town Days.

Preliminary program

2nd of June (Thursday)

Arrival, informal gathering

3rd of June (Friday)

- 09:00 Registration.
- 10:00 Introduction, First session
- 12:15 *Lunch*
- 13:30 Second session
- 15:45 Visit at Estonian History Museum, introduction to the Time Travel
- 19:00 *Dinner at a medieval restaurant*

4th of June (Saturday)

- 09:00 Time Travel: 1986 in Tallinn, A day at school (*lunch included*)
Coffee. Reflections.
 - 14:15 What happened afterwards? –
Documentary shots from the end of 1980s and the 1990s, comments by Tõnu Pedaru.
- Evening program: A tour in the old town/ in the passages under the bastions (permanent exhibition: Tallinn 1219 – 2219)

5th of June (Sunday)

- 09:00 First session
- 10:45 Second session
- 12:15 *Lunch*
- 13:30 Third session
Panel discussion. Conclusion.
- 15:30 End

6th of June (Monday), excursion day

Tour in Northern Estonia, visiting museums and sightseeing.

Registration for the conference will start on February 1st and close on April 1st 2011. There will be a registration form available on the address www.linnamuuseum.ee/linnamuuseum/eng/ and on www.bridgingages.com The estimated participation fee will be 200 Euros, and an extra fee for the excursion day.

Information and news about the conference will be available in the website of Tallinn City Museum www.linnamuuseum.ee/linnamuuseum/eng/ and on the Bridging Ages website www.bridgingages.com.



Bastion passages.



Applied Cultural Heritage

How telling the past at historic sites benefits society

Bridging Ages Conference in Kalmar 17-19 November 2010, organised together with Linnaeus University and Kalmar County Museum

The conference in Kalmar attracted more than 100 delegates from 16 countries all over the world. There were people from Wales, USA, Finland, Turkey, Italy, South Africa, Lithuania, England, Sweden... Three days of discussions, meetings, lectures, entertainment and a Time Travel. The four Key Note speakers had remarkable lectures, see the following pages. There were also 35 different presentations in parallel sessions on gendered heritage, sites of learning, community archaeologies, heritage as a resource, making the past meaningful, challenging stories, traumatic heritage and others. In the final panel discussion the focus was again on applied cultural heritage and how telling stories can benefit society, even traumatic and hidden stories.



The second day of the conference the delegates took part in a Time Travel to the Middle Ages, 1482 at the monastery ruin of Kronobäck, just north of Kalmar. Even though it was only two degrees and a little bit of rain/snow the Time Travel was a big experience. The participants played the parts of people coming from the tongues/language areas of the Holy Order of St John to participate in the dedication of the new monastery. The Key Questions were “Caring for others” and the Seven virtues. It all started with a medieval prayer in the church ruin.

One of the reasons for the success of the conference was due to fact that so many disciplines came together in a warm and open atmosphere to share experiences and build bridges.

Check www.bridgingages.com for more information and photos.



Most of the one hundred participants from sixteen countries, dressed up in medieval costumes, after the Time Travel at Kronobäck.



Keynote Speakers at the Kalmar conference

The Benefits of Teaching from the Local Historic Environment at Universities

The Public History Program at New Mexico State University, offers a variety of courses, including Time Travels, Oral History, Historic Preservation, Heritage Tourism, Historical Editing, and Museum Studies. These courses teach undergraduate and graduate students how to utilize local heritage and nearby places to bring history alive in classrooms and museums. There are many benefits in using Historic Environment Education (HEE). This method helps preserve nearby heritage, historic buildings and neighborhoods, local narratives, and the wisdom that resides in places. HEE creates social capital for healthier communities. It helps prepare students for jobs outside of academia. And HEE uncovers anomalies in the historical paradigms which can help reshape our understanding and interpretation of local, regional, national, and even international history.



Time Travelling in New Mexican history is a course that has been taught at the New Mexico State University in Las Cruces since 2002. The university students research a certain time period and then assume a local character from that time. A scenario is written and at the end of the term, the students organise Time Travels for students from 12 years old to 18 years old. We time travel to the year 1912 because that is when New Mexico became a state. A Time Travel Manual is compiled to facilitate the studies. It can be seen at <http://web.nmsu.edu/~publhist/timetraveling.pdf>.

Jon Hunner
Professor in History, New Mexico State University, USA
Vice President Bridging Ages

Instrumentalism in Heritage Learning

Museums and archives throughout the world functions in more or less the same way as they have for centuries or let's say since the last decades of the 19th Century. Well, that is a truth which can be debated and I will do so in the following. I will argue that it is true that museums, archives and other heritage institutions in a narrow sense do really function in the same way as they always have.



We are offering ourselves as museums to the public and to the decision makers in society as instruments for nationalism and as the same fantastic tool for this today as the museums were a century ago. We are even combining this with the very old fashioned and in academic terms very little productive way of establishing relevant insights. This combination is counter productive if we want a heritage sector which is at the centre of society and regarded as such not only by our selves but by the stakeholders in development.

The need for experience based attitude learning

This development which I characterize in such a critical way – even though I want to confess the love for museums, archives and galleries – becomes more and more evident as times goes. There seems to be two roads open for the near future.

The heritage sector can continue on the paths of offering the same as we have always done and combine it with great visitor numbers.

The other road map for the heritage sector to me seems to be about opening our eyes and recognise the demand for attitude based learning which grows world wide.

In the US they are talking about *Skills for the 21st Century*. In Europe we are taking about *Key competences for lifelong learning*, but in reality we are more or less talking about the same thing and have our mutual inspiration from UNESCO and OECD.

In a European Union terminology the eight key competences for lifelong learning are defined (Commission of the European Communities 2004 & 2005). Four of these are of special importance for museums:

- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

The idea behind such thinking is trying to imagine what people in Europe – but it might as well be in the world – have to acquire and develop as competences in order to manage ones own life and to contribute to the society. The key competences are professionally and very broadly defined by the EU and realizing this makes it quite natural to see where the heritage sector fits in and the best of it is that society actually invites us in and wants us to play an important part.

Henrik Zipsane
Director, Jamtli regional museum, Östersund, Sweden

Multiple-woundedness: Listening to stories of dispossession, death and triumph in KwaZulu-Natal

When violence permeates society so much that two to three generations know no other life but the life of violence, then the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was a valuable milestone in the history of South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province. Although the 1996 TRC hearing unearthed the largely unreported acts of violence, the life expectancy of the commission was not long enough to expose other acts in KZN. The paper looks at other initiatives of addressing the legacy of the apartheid violence.



Other forms of violence about which not much is written continue to be responsible for deaths and trauma in the province. These forms of violence like witchcraft and sorcery accusations, family feuds, domestic violence, farm workers and farm dwellers displacements have not had space in the TRC processes which were largely oriented towards political violence. The trauma manifested especially by victims and their relatives during the TRC hearings of 1996 were of a magnitude that overwhelmed the officials and functionaries of the commission alike.

The non-governmental initiatives of healing the nation in KZN include the workshops conducted by KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council and the Healing of Memories Institute. Sinomlando Research Centre interviews those who shared their stories at the workshops in order to record them and produce a book out of them. One of the aims is to disseminate the book to help other to learn from the stories how to move forward after multiple traumatic experiences. Three stories of multiple-woundedness were used in this article to show how in the post-democratic South Africa in KZN people continue to seek ways to process their violent past. When one of the three story tellers began her story, she lost composure and cried as she narrated how she and her two sisters lost their husbands in violent deaths. The other narrators who were men are using the courts to find ways out of their violent experiences of farm killings and land dispossessions.

In an independent initiative the rural community Vulindlela area near Pietermaritzburg, organized a cleansing ceremony for those who participated in the 1987 – 1993 killings. Traditionally, those who were involved in a conflict were not only cleansed but they also had a chance to reconcile through what Zulus call *ukukhumelana umlotha*. Men going to war are doctored by means of a concoction called *intelezi* to instil in them the spirit of bravery and the minimization. Until the cleansing is done, those who fought will continue to manifest violent behaviour to the extent of even abusing their wives.

What is notable in the maze of the violence that continues to envelope ordinary people especially in the rural areas is that the survivors find ways to emerge as victors from their ordeal. It is also commendable that initiatives come from various quarters outside the control of the government to create and provide safe and non-judgemental spaces where the wounded are able to tell their and process stories.

Radikobo Ntsimane

*Deputy Director of Sinomlando Centre for Oral History and Memory Work
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*

To travel in an excursion and return

To travel is both a movement in time and space. Travelling in space we usually do and travel in time we do in our Time Travels. But what is it that we are doing really when travelling, if not just to be watchers or fast visitors? We leave our home or the time we are in, we make an excursion and come back again. To be home can mean belonging, to recognize what is acquainted or known for us. To make an excursion is to open ourselves for new experiences and to come home means to come back to a new home, not the same as what we made the excursion from.



To be a traveler means to be both a local and a global citizen and a particular person belonging to a certain context, but at the same time a universal creature, since we all belong to the same species, the humankind. To be a traveler in this sense means to look at the present in relation to the past and the future, the space of experience we have from the past and the horizon of expectations we have in terms of both fear and hope. Our experience of time, lived time, has narrative connections to cosmic or physical time. With our calendars, in the shift of generations, the tracks we have from the past and in our narratives we connect ourselves to the universal. What we in this sense have in order to understand ourselves better is what we call the cultural heritage, in terms of sites, stories and narratives. Without a relation to this space of experience we lose the meaning of our lives, and we lose our orientation into the future.

The concept I use here is what we call *bildung*, in Swedish *bildning*. There are different versions of *bildung* such as classical *bildung*, liberal education and *bildung* as excursion and return. These versions are today in transformation, trying to find ways beyond the local and the national. The relation between acquainted and the unacquainted have a relation to dialogue. To open ourselves for the foreign and new means to set our former understanding in play. This play opens a space between the home and the foreign. Here is the space for imagination, creativity and improvisation. And just here we have the possibility to open for the postcolonial concept “the third space”, and a new way to understand ourselves not just as local beings, but also as global beings. If you don’t study others you don’t understand yourself. Ubuntu is a South African expression meaning something like: I am because you are/ you are because I am. We are depending on each other. An expression of reconciliation. How do we live *ubundu*?

Bernt Gustavsson

Professor of Education, Örebro University, Sweden

Conference Bridging Ages South Africa

Social Cohesion through Time Travels

Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal 20 - 21 October 2010

For the people of Port Shepstone in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa the Bridging Ages Conference held in this seaside town was a first and historic occasion. It was indeed a privilege and honour for the Port Shepstone Twinning Association the local host. The conference was opened by the Hibiscus Coast Mayor, Nolwazi Shusha.

The conference theme "Social Cohesion Through Time Travel" was most appropriate and significant for the conditions of the our young and fledgling democracy.

Time Travel has been implemented in South Africa in four provinces commencing in 2006. The conference, in dealing with the ten recorded SA Time Travel sites/scenarios, various speakers and study circle discussions, brought home the need for recording our history from all perspectives.



Engaging all sectors of the community (with oral history being a key component of recording this history) is very effective in developing a sense of ownership of the process and ultimately the history itself. It also became apparent that Time Travel can be used as an effective tool in a "healing the nation" process, as presented by Radikobo Ntsimane.

The 142 conference delegates came from five provinces in South Africa with individual guests from Sweden and Belgium. Their backgrounds included museum personnel, various government departments especially from Arts, Culture and Education, museums, educators and civil society.

Delegates participated in the first recorded Time Travel in KwaZulu-Natal located in the 1905, pre Bambatha Rebellion, period. Also significant is that this year 2010, marks the 150 years anniversary of the arrival of the Indentured Indian labourers. The 1905 Time Travel recorded history talks to all aspects of the period viz the character of colonialism, the resistance of the Zulus and the plight of the Indian labourers.



The barge arrives in the harbour with new labourers from India, Time Travel to 1905 in the Port Shepstone harbour.

The wide ranging exhibition, showcasing Twinning history and up to date projects, recorded Time Travels in SA, various cultures, civil society work, tourism and focus on the work of our democratic government, was educational, interesting and appropriately commemorated this occasion.

It was a singular achievement to facilitate the fantastic cooperation between the Twinning Association, various partners such as KZN Museum Service and Olof Palme International Center, many volunteers, who toiled and borrowed to make the conference a huge success.

With very limited resources, it was the people's participation and ownership that made this conference most cost effective. It has demonstrated that if one engages with communities, anything is possible. The media has also been most supportive with wide coverage, as have business and various cultural groups.



KZN Minister of Arts and Culture,
Weziwe Thusi.

The conference dinner, was highly successful with 250 attendees. Again, it was well planned and every delegate, govt. official, mayor, member of Parliament and ordinary community member was mesmerized by the drama presented by the Ikhwezi Le- Afrika Arts and Culture organisation from Umzumbe, music by eSayidi College, and the Indian and Zulu dances. But the highlight was undoubtedly the students of the pilot schools who spoke about the impact of Time Travel on learning and education. We were very privileged to have Deputy Mayor, Clarence Johnson from the Cape Winelands District as one of our speakers at the conference dinner.

Even our Minister of Arts and Culture Weziwe Thusi, ensured that she came on the second day to endorse the conference. Her department has already adopted this methodology for transformation of the museum service. The Time Travel method has demonstrated the value of involving all sectors of society and removing the barriers that otherwise divide us through race, class, religion or language.

The highest levels of achievements can only be accomplished through networking and working in total cohesion with programmes designed to meet societal challenges.

We thank every person who made a contribution towards this most memorable and successful conference.

Gulshera Khan
Port Shepstone Twinning Association
Conference Co-ordinator and Bridging Ages South Africa
secretary.

Comments from conference delegates:
"Social cohesion in several ways"
"Bring together community"
"A Time Travel is a mind-blowing experience"
"Talk of the town"



Indian traditional dance.

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